

**OFFICE OF THE LT. GOVERNOR  
STATEHOUSE  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204-2797**

**Sue Ellspermann  
LT. GOVERNOR**

**For Immediate Release**  
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**Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann Announces  
Blight Elimination Program Awards**  
*Applicants in 23 counties to share more than  
\$12 million to address blighted homes*

Indianapolis – Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann today announced two rounds of awards from Indiana’s Hardest Hit Fund Blight Elimination Program (BEP). The 23 successful Indiana applicants from Divisions Five and Six received a combined total of nearly \$12 million to help prevent avoidable foreclosures by eliminating blighted and abandoned homes in those communities through the BEP.

The 18 successful Division Five applicants receiving awards totaling \$8.2 million include:

Cass County:

- The City of Logansport \$ 925,000
- The Town of Walton \$ 25,000

Clay County:

- The City of Brazil \$ 215,000

Daviess County:

- The City of Washington \$ 459,000

DeKalb County:

- The City of Auburn \$ 100,000
- The City of Garrett \$ 75,000
- The Town of St. Joe \$ 50,000
- The Town of Waterloo \$ 236,000

Henry County:

- The City of New Castle \$ 700,000

Jackson County:

- The City of Seymour \$ 72,000

Knox County:

- The City of Bicknell \$ 415,000
- The City of Vincennes \$ 390,000

Miami County:	
• The City of Peru	\$ 813,000
Shelby County:	
• The City of Shelbyville	\$ 304,000
Greene County	\$ 945,000
Gibson County	\$1,440,000
Posey County	\$ 617,000
Noble County/The City of Kendallville	\$ 487,000

The 11 successful Division Six applicants receiving awards totaling \$3.7 million include:

Blackford County:	
• City of Dunkirk (Jay/Blackford)	\$ 176,000
• City of Hartford City	\$ 507,000
• City of Montpelier	\$ 61,000
Carroll County:	
• City of Delphi	\$ 68,000
Fayette County:	
• City of Connersville	\$ 125,000
Ohio County:	
• City of Rising Sun	\$ 161,000
Rush County:	
• City of Rushville	\$ 230,000
Spencer County:	
• Town of Richland City	\$ 144,000
Starke County:	
• City of Knox	\$ 187,000
Pulaski County	\$ 147,000
Sullivan County	\$1,914,000

“The cities and towns receiving nearly \$12 million in BEP funds for Divisions Five and Six will be able to demolish over 550 blighted properties, which will stabilize property values and help prevent foreclosures for neighboring homeowners,” said Lt. Governor Ellspermann. “The recipients, with the help of their program partners, will be able to provide much needed revitalization in their communities.”

These local governments and their non-profit partners are the successful applicants in the fifth and sixth rounds of the BEP. The BEP provides an opportunity for local units of government in all 92 Indiana counties to compete for a total of \$75 million available for blight elimination funding to prevent avoidable foreclosures through the removal of blighted, vacant and abandoned homes.

“Cities across Indiana have been struggling with the damaging effects caused by vacant and blighted properties and will soon see the benefits of these federal funds,” said Sarah Bloom Raskin, Treasury Deputy Secretary. “Removing blighted properties is important in the fight to

reduce foreclosures and we look forward to continuing our partnership with the State of Indiana to help stabilize hardest hit communities.”

The BEP funds are drawn from the \$221.7 million in Hardest Hit Funds allocated to Indiana. In February 2014, the U.S. Department of the Treasury approved the use of \$75 million of Indiana’s Hardest Hit Funds by the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) for successful BEP applicants. The partnership between IHCDA and Treasury allows for funding to eliminate blighted properties and offers a variety of end uses for the newly cleared parcels, such as green space or redevelopment.

“We’re excited about with the neighborhood-enhancing projects scheduled to take place around the state,” said Mark Neyland, IHCDA Director of Asset Preservation, who manages Indiana’s Hardest Hit Fund Program. “This program will assist scores of Indiana communities in their efforts to prevent avoidable foreclosures and keep property values stable for many years to come.”

The State of Indiana is divided into six funding divisions. The first round application deadlines have closed for all six divisions. Second rounds are currently open in Divisions Three through Six. Lt. Governor Ellspermann previously announced awards for successful applicants in Division One on May 22, 2014, Division Two applicants on June 26, Division Three applicants on July 24 and Division Four on August 28.

IHCDA estimates that approximately 4,000 blighted and/or abandoned homes in Indiana will be eliminated through the Blight Elimination Program. Visit [www.877GetHope.org/blight](http://www.877GetHope.org/blight) to learn more.

## **Background**

Blighted, vacant and abandoned homes are a serious issue for Hoosier homeowners, neighborhoods and communities because Indiana has the highest percentage of abandoned foreclosed homes in the country. RealtyTrac and 24/7 Wall Street have reported that roughly 30 percent of Indiana’s foreclosed homes are abandoned. Many of these properties fall quickly into a state of blight and attract undesirable or unlawful activity, which can negatively impact Indiana homeowners and neighborhoods by reducing property values and draining local government resources. Many Indiana communities simply lack the resources necessary to combat this problem alone.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury established the Housing Finance Agency Innovation Fund for the Hardest-Hit Markets (Hardest Hit Fund) to provide financial assistance to families in the states most impacted by the downturn of the housing market. The U.S. Department of the Treasury designed the overall program to give each participating state the flexibility to tailor its program to the unique factors contributing to its state’s foreclosure problems. Eighteen states and the District of Columbia administer Hardest Hit Fund assistance to qualified homeowners struggling to make their mortgage payments.

IHCDA’s announcement that it was exploring the use of Hardest Hit Funds to eliminate blighted and abandoned properties has not detracted from the mission of helping struggling homeowners

avoid foreclosure. The Blight Elimination Program is simply one more instrument in the foreclosure prevention tool kit. As of September 30, 2014, over 4,000 homeowners in 91 counties have received more than \$50 million in Hardest Hit Fund mortgage payment assistance. Mortgage payment assistance programs are expected to continue through December 31, 2017. For more information on Indiana's Hardest Hit Fund, visit [www.877GetHope.org](http://www.877GetHope.org).

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*The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), chaired by Lt. Governor Ellspermann, provides housing opportunities, promotes self-sufficiency and strengthens communities in order to build an Indiana with a sustainable quality of life for all Hoosiers in the community of their choice. For more information, visit [www.ihcda.in.gov](http://www.ihcda.in.gov) or [www.in.gov/myihcda](http://www.in.gov/myihcda).*

*The Lieutenant Governor manages the following agencies of State government: Office of Defense Development, Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Office of Tourism Development, Office of Small Business and Entrepreneurship and the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority. For updates from Lt. Governor Ellspermann and the agencies she oversees, please sign up at [www.lg.in.gov](http://www.lg.in.gov)*

**Media Contact:**

Amber Kent

IHCDA Public Information Officer

[akent1@ihcda.in.gov](mailto:akent1@ihcda.in.gov)

(317) 232-7781